

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 are pending.

Accurately Cite Portions of References

The Office Action asserts that Bartfai teaches one portion of Claim 1 at Col. 2 lines 5-10 and another portion of Claim 1 at Col. 3 lines 5-10. However, the Bartfai reference does not have columns. It has paragraphs. Therefore, Applicants are unable to determine what portions of Bartfai the Office Action is referring to. Applicants respectfully request that future Office Actions accurately cite portions of references.

103 Rejection

Claims 1, 9, and 17

In paragraph 5 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 9 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0101367 by Bartfai et al. (referred to hereinafter as "Bartfai") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,760,838 by Owen et al. (referred to hereinafter as "Owen"). The Applicants have reviewed the cited reference and respectfully submit that the embodiments recited by the claims are neither taught nor suggested by Bartfai or Owen, alone or in combination.

Independent Claim 1 recites,

A method of error protection comprising:
detecting an error during communication between nodes in a network, said nodes separated by a link;
blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error;
unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and
setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween, and wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element.

Applicants respectfully submit that Bartfai does not teach or suggest any of the limitations recited by Claim 1.

Bartfai teaches critical adapter local error handling. For example, in the abstract Bartfai indicates that a mechanism is associated with adapters for indicating critical errors so that applications running on a network are not

prematurely terminated and the node with the error is not prematurely removed from its connectivity with the other nodes within a network.

The Office Action failed to recite any portion of any reference against “detecting an error during communication between nodes in a network, said nodes separated by a link,” as recited by Claim 1.

The Office Action asserts that Bartfai teaches “blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error” in paragraph 0028. Paragraph 0028 lines 7-14 states, “Once the threshold limit for refresh attempts is met, critical adapter errors (CA) become permanent adapter errors (PA). A permanent adapter error causes a reset but does not initiate an adapter restart operation...the error condition severity is raised to the level of ‘permanent’ error.” Therefore, paragraph 0028 indicates that once communications are blocked they remain blocked.

The Office Action asserts that Bartfai teaches “unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled,” as recited by Claim 1 at paragraph 0029. The embodiment recited by Bartfai at paragraph 0029 is mutually exclusive with the embodiment recited by Bartfai at paragraph 0028. For example, the first sentence of paragraph 0029 states, “However, prior to meeting the threshold for declaring an adapter error to be permanent...” Therefore, paragraph 0029 teaches away from “unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes,” as recited by Claim 1.

Further, paragraph 0029 lines 18-19 recite “...the error producing adapter is then reset and reinitialized in an attempt to clear the problem...” (emphasis added). In contrast Claim 1 recites, “...provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error” (emphasis added). Therefore, Bartfai does not teach or suggest, “unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled,” as recited by Claim 1.

The Office Action appears to indicate that Bartfai does not teach or suggest “setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by each of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween...” The Office

Action clearly indicates that Bartfai does not teach or suggest "...wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element." Applicants respectfully agree. For the foregoing reasons, Bartfai does not teach or suggest Claim 1.

The Office Action indicates that Owen does not teach or suggest the following recited by Claim 1:

detecting an error during communication between nodes in a network, said nodes separated by a link;

blocking further communication between said nodes in response to said detected error;

unblocking said blocked communication between said nodes, provided said communicating nodes have resolved said detected error, wherein said communication between said nodes is re-enabled; and

setting a link usage indicator in a first storage element by reach of said communicating nodes prior to communication therebetween...

Applicants respectfully agree. The Office Action indicates that Owen teaches "wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first element" at Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 11A, Col. 12 lines 55-67, Col. 12 lines 30-35, Col. 12 lines 40-45, and Col. 20 lines 18-20. The Office Action states, "each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first storage element (see col. 12, lines 30-34 the command register...)" It appears the Office Action asserts that Owen's command register teaches Claim 1's first storage element. The Office Action also states, "wherein each of said communicating nodes (... node ID...)." From this it appears that the Office Action is asserting that Owen's node ID teaches "each of said nodes" as recited by Claim 1. In this case, Owen would have to teach that each of Owen's node IDs is relative to said corresponding position in Owen's command register. Owen teaches that the command register includes various bits such as a warm reset bit, a double ended bit. However, Owen does not teach that each of Owen's node IDs is relative to said corresponding position in Owen's command register. Therefore, Owen cannot teach or suggest "wherein each of said communicating nodes has a corresponding position in said first storage element, and wherein said link usage indicator set by each of said nodes is relative to said corresponding position in said first element," as recited by Claim 1.

Therefore, Owen does not remedy the deficiency in Bartfai in that neither Owen nor Bartfai teach or suggest any of the limitations recited by Claim 1. Independent Claims 9 and 17 should be patentable for similar reasons that Claim 1 should be patentable. Claims 2-8 depend on Claim 1. Claims 10-16 depend on Claim 9. Claims 18-24 depend on Claim 17. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of their respective independent claims. Further, these dependent claims include additional limitations which further make them patentable. Therefore, these dependent claims should be patentable for at least the reasons that their respective independent claims should be patentable.

Conclusions

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims.

Based on the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 19-24 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these claims.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,
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